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ABSTRACT

This review of the literature on Puerto Ricans in historical and social science research focuses on major English-language books. The review finds that colonialism has been a major factor in, an orienting influence of, and a focus for critical writing about Puerto Ricans. In general, books published before 1970 were reflective, implicitly or explicitly, of Puerto Rico's colonial relationship to the United States. The bulk of works published after 1970 have been critical of this relationship and have attempted to deconstruct the earlier literature and contextualize Puerto Rico and Puerto Ricans. This paper begins by emphasizing the political and thematic similarities in the literature of Puerto Ricans and Native American peoples, illuminating the unique political relationships both groups have had with the U.S. government and to illustrate how this relationship influenced the literature on this subject. Works of both periods of the literature are then reviewed, highlighting "La Vida" by Oscar Lewis. The implications of this body of literature for multicultural education are discussed, stressing the necessity of developing material that is sensitive to the culture of Puerto Ricans in Puerto Rico and on the mainland. (Contains 198 references.) (SLD)

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